

# **Joint Committee on Corrections**

## **2012**

### **Information for Legislative Institutional Visits**

Facility Name: Women's Eastern Reception, Diagnostic and Correctional Center				
Custody Level	C-1 to C-5 female		Warden	Angela Mesmer
Total Acreage	117		Address	1101 East Highway 54 Vandalia, Mo. 63382
Acreage w/in Perimeter	47			
Square Footage	420,231		Telephone:	(573) 594-6686
Year Opened	1997		Fax:	(573) 594-6789
Operational Capacity/Count (as of November 30, 2012)	1,460 / 1,636			
General Population Beds (capacity and count as of November 30, 2012)	1,532 / 1,175		Deputy Warden	Cybelle Webber (Operations)
Segregation Beds (capacity and count as of November 30, 2012)	48 / 25		Deputy Warden	Tom Dunn (Offender Management)
Treatment Beds (capacity and count as of November 30, 2012)	330 / 236		Asst. Warden	Deborah Miller
Work Cadre Beds (capacity count as of November 30, 2012)	54 / 33		Asst. Warden	N/A
Diagnostic Beds (capacity and count as of November 30, 2012)	200 / 184		Major	John Gibbs
Protective Custody Beds (capacity and count as of November 30, 2012)	0 / 0			

#### **1. Capital Improvement Needs:**

- a. How would you rate the overall condition of the physical plant of the institution?  
*I would rate the overall condition of the physical plant as very good. Due to newer technology there will be a need for some energy efficient upgrades. This past year the following energy efficient upgrades have either been made or are in the process.*
  - Replacement of all metal halide lamps throughout the institution (222) with fluorescent fixtures. Re-lamping all fluorescent fixtures with energy saving ballasts and 28 watt T-8 fluorescent lamps (funded by FMDC E&E budget).
  - Upgrade of building automated system, installation of new motors and controls to HVAC system. This will enhance efficient operations and result in cost savings (proposed funding DNR – federal stimulus).
  - Shut off 90 of 99 wall pack lights (250 watt). This didn't affect visibility at night and resulted in electrical cost savings (maintenance in house project).
  - All exterior lighting will be replaced with LED style lighting.
  - Radio system was upgraded November 28, 2012.

- b. What capital improvement projects do you foresee at this facility over the next six years?
  1. *Del-Norte security system for fences and gates, upgrade or replace*
  2. *New key system*
  3. *Clean and paint water tower*
  4. *MicroLite lighting system, upgrade or replace*
  5. *Institutional Parking lot, overlay, seal and stripe*
  6. *Asphalt front gravel parking lot*
  7. *Increase the width of the Perimeter road by approximately (5) five feet (Asphalt)*
  8. *Widen and lengthen asphalt turning area, used by tractor trailers, for warehouse and MVE deliveries*
- c. How critical do you believe those projects are to the long-term sustainability of this facility?  
*The first five improvements are listed as high priority and involve safety, security, and equipment to enhance our energy saving capabilities.*

## 2. Staffing:

- a. Do you have any critical staff shortages?  
*No, due to departmental recruitment efforts, we have not had any staff shortages.*
- b. What is your average vacancy rate for all staff and for custody staff only?  
*Approximately 21 for all staff and 11 for custody staff only.*
- c. Does staff accrual or usage of comp-time by staff effect your management of the institution?  
*Yes, it is difficult to keep the facility fully staffed and keep comp-time to a minimum. In addition to staff shortages, we accumulate overtime due to absenteeism, transporting offenders on out count appointments, hospital supervision and training. A weekly report is submitted by each shift that reports the number of overtime hours earned and the justification for those hours. Whenever possible, staff members who earn overtime are given an equivalent amount of time off before the end of the week to eliminate overtime accumulation.*
- d. What is the process for assigning overtime to staff?  
*When overtime is required to staff positions, volunteers are asked for first. Volunteers sign up to work overtime in advance on sign up sheets located in the airlock, in front of the Control Center. If a post cannot be filled through request for volunteers, overtime is mandated utilizing seniority list broken down by shift and rank (CO I's, CO II's) with the lowest seniority to the highest. When a staff member works overtime, they are moved from the top of the list to the bottom (to qualify, staff has to work at least two or more hours in order to qualify and be moved from the top of the list). Staff may volunteer at any time to work overtime, to move their name down on the list. The seniority list is posted on the staff bulletin board next to radio and key issue, which is accessible to staff 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The list is updated daily by the shift timekeepers.*
- e. Approximately what percentage of the comp-time accrued at this institution does staff utilize as time off and what percentage is paid-off?  
*Approximately 55% of the comp-time accrued at WERDCC is utilized by staff as time off and approximately 45% is paid-off.*
- f. Is staff able to utilize accrued comp-time when they choose?  
*Yes, if staffing permits.*

## 3. Education Services:

- a. How many (and %) of inmate students at this institution are currently enrolled in school?  
*475 (32%) of inmate students at this institution are currently enrolled in school with the Department of Corrections' Education Department and Van-Far School District.*
- b. How many (and %) of inmate students earn their GED each year in this institution?

*On average, 110 (25%) of inmate students earn their GED each year at WERDCC.*

- c. What are some of the problems faced by offenders who enroll in education programs?  
*One problem faced by offenders who enroll in education programs is attempting to coordinate school with the other classes and programs that the offenders either participate in voluntarily or are mandated to participate. Low self-esteem of the offender is an issue. If they believe they are capable, they will progress. Many of the offenders are low achievers and simply do not want or care about their education and view having to attend school as a form of punishment.*

#### **4. Substance Abuse Services:**

- a. What substance abuse treatment or education programs does this institution have?  
*Substance Abuse treatment is provided by Gateway Foundation, a contracted agency. We provide group therapy, individual sessions, educational lectures, educational videos and peer groups.*
- b. How many beds are allocated to those programs?  
*A total of 240 beds are allocated to the Treatment Program: 90 Long Term (includes year long offenders and 6 month offenders) and 150 Short Term (ITC, 120 Treatment, PV84).*
- c. How many offenders do those programs serve each year?  
*In FY10 approximately 987 clients were served.*
- d. What percent of offenders successfully complete those programs?  
*93.3% were successfully discharged from the program.*
- e. What, in your opinion, is the biggest challenge to running a treatment program in a prison setting?  
*A primary challenge is working our program around the institution's schedule: canteen, count, med-line, and various and assorted other activities that can interfere with a daily schedule. These things are unavoidable, however, and we have adjusted. The Department of Corrections and Gateway work together to provide a continuation of services.*

*Another challenge is space. We offer many valuable services to include Impact of Crime on Victims, GED classes, Parents as Teachers, in addition to treatment services, making it a challenge to find space for the many necessary programs. We have managed to work it out, however. Again, the Department of Corrections works with us to make it happen.*

*The offender's ability to sign out at will after being stipulated to treatment is a challenge. This decreases their motivation to participate in and successfully complete the program.*

#### **5. Vocational Programs:**

- a. What types of vocational education programs are offered at this institution?  
*Professional Gardening, Building Trades, Business Technology, Cosmetology, Certified Nurses Aide.*
- b. How many offenders (and %) participate in these programs each year?  
*Vocational Education served 227 offenders this year.*
- c. Do the programs lead to the award of a certificate?  
*All five classes lead to a completion certificate and Department of Labor certificate. Cosmetology can also lead to a State Cosmetology License if the offender passes the state board examination. Certified Nurses Aide can also lead to a license if the offender qualifies for the work release program. Business Technology students can also earn a Microsoft Office certificate in either Word, Excel, Power Point or Access. Building Trades students can earn a NCCER certificate.*
- d. Do you offer any training related to computer skills?

*Yes, Business Technology is a computer-based course teaching secretarial type skills. All classes have computers in the room where offenders have access to typing skills and other limited skills on computers (such as data entry).*

**6. Missouri Vocational Enterprises:**

- a. What products are manufactured at this institution?  
*Lab coats, hospital scrubs (tops and bottoms), visiting room jackets, broadcloth pajamas (men's and women's), mumu gowns, hospital gowns, seersucker robes with snaps, fleece robes with ties, t-shirts (with or without pockets, short sleeve, long sleeve and sleeveless), jersey shorts, twill shorts, jersey lounge pants, fleece jackets, fleece pants, sweatshirts, sweatpants, thermal tops, thermal pants (men's and women's), twill work pants, inmate work pants, inmate work shirts, sport shirts, work shirts, dress shirts, kitchen towels, terry bath towels, washcloths, bed sheets (flat and fitted), pillowcases, fleece blankets, thermal blankets, suicide vests, garment hangers, canteen bags with pocket, mesh hygiene bags and screen printing.*
- b. How many (and %) of offenders work for MVE at this site?  
*We have a budget that allows 150 offenders to be employed for MVE, which would be 9.1% of the population; however, we currently have 120 offenders employed for MVE, which would be 7.3% of the population.*
- c. Who are the customers for those products?  
*State institutions, including offender canteen; any tax exempt entity, such as hospitals, churches and schools; and state employees.*
- d. What skills are the offenders gaining to help them when released back to the community?  
*We teach all sewing skills required in the manufacture of clothing and related products including needle changes, preventative maintenance and minor repair of machines. In addition, their exposure to this workplace will afford a smooth transition in the community workplace. Offenders learn accepted practices that will allow them to interact more easily when employed in the community. Offenders are awarded certificates as they meet the 2,000-hour requirements and are recognized by the Department of Labor when they accumulate 4,000-6,000 hours.*

**7. Medical Health Services:**

- a. Is the facility accredited by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care?  
*Yes.*
- b. How many offenders are seen in chronic care clinics?  
*We have 1,229 offenders enrolled in a chronic care clinic; 139 were seen last month for routine chronic care visits.*
- c. What are some examples of common medical conditions seen in the medical unit?  
*Sinus complaints, common cold, headaches, toothaches, menstrual cramps.*
- d. What are you doing to provide health education to offenders?  
*Educational pamphlets are available in the medical unit; educational tapes of various subjects are aired on the offender television monthly; various bulletin boards in the medical unit are rotated with educational topics related to current trends; we hold an annual health fair for the offenders and one-on-one instructions are provided; prior to release, offenders with complicated conditions receive one-on-one counseling and assistance setting up appropriate appointments in the community.*
- e. Have you had any cases of active Tuberculosis in this facility in the past year? If so, how did you respond?  
*No active cases of TB have been identified in the facility.*
- f. Is the aging of the population effecting health care in prisons as it is effecting health care every where else? If yes, please explain.

*No, we have not noticed an increase in care due to aging of the population.*

**8. Mental Health Services:**

- a. How do offenders go about obtaining mental health treatment services?

*There are multiple ways for offenders to access mental health services.*

- *At the time of entry into the institution, a comprehensive mental health evaluation is completed. At this time, if there is an underlying or previously identified mental health need, the offender is referred to the psychiatrist and admitted to chronic care clinic.*
- *Offenders are provided orientation to the Medical Service Request system, which provides them the ability to self-refer should they feel they require mental health services.*
- *All institutional staff is encouraged to be aware of behaviors and statements made by offenders and to refer offenders to mental health for screening and potential ongoing services if indicated.*
- *Daily presence and weekly rounds on segregation often identifies offenders who are experiencing various difficulties and could benefit from mental health services.*

- b. How many successful suicides (and %) occurred here in the past year and what is being done to prevent suicides?

*There were no successful suicides (0%) occurring at WERDCC in the past year. Suicide prevention instruction is given to all staff by Mental Health through Core Training. All offenders are screened for any signs of suicidality by the Receiving Nurse at entry and again by a Qualified Mental Health Practitioner that same day or the next day. Offenders are again screened for suicidality through chronic care visits or through Medical Service Requests or staff referral.*

- c. Approximately how many (and %) of the offenders in this institution are taking psychotropic medications?

*Approximately 590 offenders are taking psychotropic medications for mental illness, which is approximately 36% of our offender population.*

- d. How many offenders in this facility are chronically or seriously mentally ill and what is being done for them?

*Approximately 500 offenders are in chronic care. They are offered residential psychiatric care through the Women's Social Rehabilitation Unit, medication management by one of our psychiatrist with routine visits, routine chronic care visits with a licensed mental health professional, psycho-educational groups, individual psychotherapy, group psychotherapy, crisis intervention, treatment planning by a multidisciplinary treatment planning team and discharge planning for reentry to their community at release.*

9. What is your greatest challenge in managing this institution?

*The greatest challenge I currently face is with the anticipation of managerial staff soon to retire and the uncertainty that creates, as well as the knowledge and experience lost by their departure. I would also add the challenges of managing compensatory time, hiring and retaining quality employees and maintaining good staff morale for employees who do not receive adequate pay.*

10. What is your greatest asset to assist you in managing this institution?

*Just as managing staff is one of the greatest challenges, they are also, without a doubt the most valuable asset. The teamwork exhibited by staff and Executive support are invaluable.*

11. What is the condition of the facilities' vehicle fleet? (mileage, old vehicles etc?)

*This facility has twenty (20) vehicles in its fleet.*

*One (1) of the 15-passenger vans is a 1998 model year vehicle with over 200,000 miles.*

*One (1) of the 15-passenger vans is a 1999 model with over 170,000 miles.*

*One (1) of the 15-passenger vans is a 2005 model with over 160,000 miles.*

*There are ten (10) vehicles in the fleet that are model year 2006 or newer; all with mileage below 85,000 miles.*

*We have two (2) vehicle patrol cars with mileage of 230,000 and 180,000.*

*We have four (4) maintenance trucks with mileage below 36,000 and range in model years 1994 to 1998.*

*This facility has three 15-passenger vans in need of replacement due to high mileage, age and major components wearing out. These vans are highly important to the facility because they are in rotation with one van on the road every business day accumulating two hundred mile round trips delivering bus releases and inter-office mail. The two vehicle patrol cars will need replacement within the next 12 months due to the fact that they average an accumulation of 3,500 miles each month.*

12. Assess the morale of your custody staff; high, medium, or low and please provide detailed explanation. **(Please have the Major answer)**

*At this time I believe the morale to be medium. The morale runs like a barometer, high, medium and low. It depends on how things are going with the job, other staff and at home. Overall I think it averages medium. Things that make it run low include, but are not limited to, staff shortages (currently 17 Custody staff short), news of no raises, higher insurance rates, no overtime, too much overtime, high gas prices, absenteeism, etc. I hear conflicting responses from staff when I ask them if they think morale is high or low. Some say high, some say low and some say medium.*

*The Gender Informed Practice Assessment team, who completed a survey in 2010 with a cross-section of our staff, said the morale is high with examples cited by staff as fundraisers for other staff, helping other staff when things go bad for them, staff believing in the programs, staff appreciating Administration coming out among them and visiting with them daily, open lines of communication, etc. We are still doing these things to the best of our ability. This committee visited with staff members that were selected at random from all three shifts and visited with them in an environment where there were no supervisors or any fear of retaliation. This would indicate the result of their survey is accurate; however day to day changes can make a big difference in the level of morale.*

*Upon my daily visits I find that staff seems to be happy with their jobs and with the way things are going generally, but I don't see the morale as being above average or below average at this time.*

13. **Caseworkers:**

A. How many caseworkers are assigned to this institution?

*We have 2 Corrections Classification Assistants, 32 Corrections Case Managers I/II, and 1 Corrections Case Manager III.*

B. Do you currently have any caseworker vacancies?

*We currently have one Corrections Case Manager I/II vacancy, which will be filled soon.*

C. Do the caseworkers accumulate comp-time?

*Case managers do accumulate compensatory time on occasion when they are called to work beyond their regular working hours due to Critical Illness/Death Notice, Division of Family Services call, attorney call or other offender crises. In some cases, they are called upon to assist the Corrections Emergency Response Team in special security searches. There are also case managers who facilitate the Impact of Crime on Victims classes, which are held on weekends.*

- D. Do the caseworkers at this institution work alternative schedules?  
*Yes, many case managers now work four, ten-hour days instead of five, eight-hour days.*
- E. How do inmates gain access to meet with caseworkers?  
*Offenders may gain access to meet with case managers through daily open door hours, wing walks, general appointments, offender correspondence, teaming violations, Transitional Accountability Plan meetings, counseling and making referrals to Mental Health and Medical.*
- F. Average caseload size per caseworker?  
75.
- # of disciplinary hearings per month?  
22
  - # of IRR's and grievances per month?  
4
  - # of transfers written per month?  
5
  - # of re-classification analysis (RCA's) per month?  
11
- G. Are there any services that you believe caseworkers should be providing, but are not providing?  
*Our staff are providing all necessary services at this time. Currently, classification staff conduct programs on Impact of Crime on Victims, Pathway to Change and Anger Management. Other duties assigned to classification staff, but not limited to, are custody support, conducting searches, investigations and counseling.*
- H. If so, what are the barriers that prevent caseworkers from delivering these services?  
*Not applicable.*
- I. What type of inmate programs/classes are the caseworkers at this institution involved in?  
*Pathway to Change, Impact of Crime on Victims Classes, Anger Management, Restorative Justice, Pre-Release, Canine Helpers Allow More Possibilities, Women's Social Rehabilitation Unit, Peer Action Care Team, Project Reach, Hospice, Beauty for Ashes and Food Service Incentive.*
- J. What other duties are assigned to caseworkers at this institution?  
*Job coordinator, processing visiting applications, key management, counseling offenders, criminal histories, offender payroll, death notices, Transition Accountability Plans, work release applications, investigations, organize room moves, file audits, notary service, bed assignments, vendor orders, court returns processed, facilitate outside phone calls with Department of Family Services and attorneys, supply requests, mental health referrals, medical referrals, chaplain referrals, escorting visitors for programs/classes, 4-H Life Program and other duties as assigned.*

#### **14. Institutional Probation and Parole officers:**

- A. How many parole officers are assigned to this institution?  
*We have 11 Institutional Parole Officers, 1 Unit Supervisor, 1 District Administrator and 3 Office Support Assistants (Keyboarding).*
- B. Do you currently have any staff shortages?  
*No. We do have a new position that we will interview for on November 28, 2012; Senior Office Support Assistant (Keyboarding).*
- C. Do the parole officers accumulate comp-time?

*No. At the current time, we have enough coverage and staff is allowed to utilize compensatory time as they acquire it.*

- D. Do the parole officers at this institution flex their time, work alternative schedules?

*Yes, they are encouraged to flex their time in order to not accumulate excessive compensatory time.*

- E. How do inmates gain access to meet with parole officers?

*Offenders submit correspondence to the Institutional Parole Officer in their housing unit and, as time permits, the Institutional Parole Officers have open door meetings. The general population units try to have two open door sessions per week. Also, the Institutional Parole Officers schedule appointments and call the offenders out to interview them for necessary reports prior to due dates. This is done automatically on the part of the parole officer. During the R&O orientation, two parole officers alternated talking to the offenders during an open forum type setting and go over probation and parole rules. A packet of information is handed out to each offender during receiving that covers probation and parole issues and who to contact with questions.*

- F. Average caseload size per parole officer?

*For the general population parole officers, their caseload is the whole housing unit, averaging around 256 offenders. The specialized caseloads, treatment and violator units are less, but still average around 175 to 200 offenders.*

- # of pre-parole hearing reports per month?

*A total of approximately 90 per month.*

- # of community placement reports per month?

*A total of approximately 15 per month, which includes proceed with release memos.*

- # of investigation requests per month?

*Approximately 130 per month.*

- G. Are there any services that you believe parole officers should be providing, but are not providing?

*The parole officers at WERDCC are not participating that much in programs or classes at the present time. Our main focus is on providing a high volume of reports to the Courts and Board, which mainly consumes our time. It would be nice if we could be more involved in Pathway to Change and pre-release programs.*

- H. If so, what are the barriers that prevent officers from delivering these services?

*At the present time, our adjusted average work units per officer is 201 when the average should be 173 work hours per officer. We have a high volume of reports that are due to the Courts and Board with time sensitive due dates.*

- I. What type of inmate programs/classes are the parole officers at this institution involved in?

*The two parole officers in the treatment unit work with classification staff and outside field officers to assign offenders to aftercare in the St. Louis and Kansas City areas. The offenders attend a vide conference via satellite to learn more about the Alt-Care program they will attend upon release.*

14. Please list any other issues you wish to discuss or bring to the attention of the members of the Joint Committee on Corrections.

*N/A.*

16. Does your institution have saturation housing? If so, how many beds?

*Yes, approximately 100 beds.*

**17. Radio/Battery Needs:**

- a. What is the number of radios in working condition?

*We began using new Kenwood radios on November 28, 2012; we have 283 new radios.*



- b. Do you have an adequate supply of batteries with a good life expectancy?  
*Yes, we have 566 new batteries.*
- c. Are the conditioners/rechargers in good working order?  
*Yes.*